FFA THE LEADERSHIP ADVANTAGE

South Carolina's

YF & FFA

Magazine

SUPPORT NATURAL, ENVIRONMENTAL & AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES EDUCATION

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PELION SC 29123

South Carolina's
YF & FFA
Magazine

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Editor-in-Chief .....Ed Crosby
Editor .....Laura G. Johnson
Art Director.....Bruce Clifton

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In This Issue...

PALS Program 5
Young Farmers State Convention 10
National Ag Day 13
An FFA International Experience 14
Alumni Raffle Planned 15

On the Cover: South Carolina FFA members meet with Governor David Beasley at the State House on February 23, 1995 for the signing of the State FFA Week Proclamation

Inset cover photo courtesy of: Rick Smoak Photography.

Notes from the State Advisor

By Dr. Dale A. Law

Dr. Dale A. Law

Spring provides many excellent opportunities for you as FFA members to become more involved in your local community and school activities, and to share your experiences about how FFA continues to help you develop premier leadership skills, grow personally and obtain a strong foundation for future career success. You and your fellow FFA members are our nations future leaders in natural, environmental, and agricultural areas. An excellent opportunity to call attention to your experiences is during National FFA Week which is being celebrated February 18-25. Plan activities and events to let your fellow students and community members know what you are learning. In recognition of National FFA Week, President Clinton says, "Since 1928, the National FFA Organization has served to expose young men and women to the science, business, and technology of agriculture, sparking ambitions and providing an invaluable leadership advantage."

The 22nd anniversary of National Agriculture Day provides another opportunity to plan activities to let the non-farm public know about modern agriculture and the skills you are developing. National Agriculture Day is being celebrated Monday, March 20, the first day of spring. This annual celebration recognizes the many men and women who provide Americans and others worldwide with food and fiber. This years theme is "Growing Better Everyday in Partnership with Nature", chosen to highlight the important contributions our farmers and ranchers have made in protecting the environment and conserving natural resources.

Working with your Chapter Advisor to establish a Project PALS Program in your school is another great opportunity to share your leadership skills and technical expertise with others, especially with elementary students in your district. Project PALS is a powerful mentoring program that pairs you with elementary students to help them explore their interests and themselves through plants and animals resulting in the development of higher self-esteem and social skills. The Kellogg Foundation has been funding this effort which has great potential for you and your local chapter to address leadership, citizenship, mentoring, discipline and the development of agricultural related skills. If you're not familiar with Project PALS, ask your Chapter Advisor for details.

Begin making plans now for the State FFA Convention and the Leadership Camp week coming in June.

PLEASE WRITE!

Your State Officers were chosen to serve your needs as representatives of the South Carolina Association of FFA. Feel free to contact them at the following addresses with program ideas, comments, suggestions, or invitations to chapter activities. They're eager to hear from you!

John Helms, *President*
South Carolina FFA
P.O. Box 116
McBee, SC 29201

Stony Oswald, *Secretary*
South Carolina FFA
1157 Selvern Road
Wagener, SC 29164

Carrie Raines, *Vice-President*
South Carolina FFA
Rt. 3, Box 31
Abbeville, SC 29620

Russell Hawkins, *Treasurer*
South Carolina FFA
P.O. Box 1253
Holly Hill, SC 29059

Grier Sandifer, *Reporter*
South Carolina FFA
871 Sandifer Road
York, SC 29745

Chad Warren, *Sentinel*
South Carolina FFA
349 Porth Circle
Lexington, SC 29072

And now...
A Word from the President

I hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season and has recovered from all the festive events that you attended. Some changes were made over the holidays concerning the monthly newsletter, AGriTATER. The editor, Grier Sandifer, along with the other state officers, decided to issue the newsletter every two months instead of every month. I strongly urge each chapter reporter to submit an article to your district reporter so that he may send it to the editor. Remember, your newsletter will only be as good as the articles that appear in it - so please send something!

Before we know it, springtime will be upon us and that means that it will soon be time for chapter banquets! If you would like to include a state officer in your banquet, please remember to keep these things in mind:

1. Let your state officer know at least two weeks in advance. All state officers keep a very busy schedule and would appreciate enough time to schedule your banquet.
2. Please give specific instructions as to how to get to your school.
3. If your chapter would like the officer to cover a specific topic or speak about anything particular, please let him/her know!
4. Most of all, let the officer know how excited you are to have him/her speak to you your chapter because we are very excited to have the opportunity to speak to YOU!!

Recently four of your state officers spent two days touring a few of the agricultural industries in South Carolina. Carrie, Stony, Grier, and I toured the Adluh Flour Co. in Columbia, Young Pecan in Florence, and IMC, Inc. in Hartsville. We learned how wheat and grain are processed into the many different types of flour you and I consume each day. We saw how the world's largest pecan sheller worked to produce perfect pecan halves. And finally, we learned how the fertilizer that you put on your crops is processed and formulated to yield the proper nutrients for your soil. Aside from learning about these very different industries, we met some very important leaders in agriculture for South Carolina. IMC, Inc. treated us to lunch and introduced us to a few sales representatives and area managers. Kirby Player and Kim Erwin played an instrumental role in organizing and planning the tour. I would like to thank them and the company executives for their time and efforts!!!

As always, I encourage each and everyone of you, as members of the greatest youth organization in the world, to write to your state officers. We will be better able to serve you if you give us your ideas and suggestions!!!

Be on the lookout for one of these six national officers to visit you during the State FFA Convention this summer! *From left to right are: (back row) Travis Hagen, national secretary; Corey Flournoy, national president; (front row) Jennafer Neufeld, central region vice president; Greg Vetter, western region vice president; Trisha Bailey, southern region vice president; and Lee Schroeder, eastern region vice president.*

FFA

THE LEADERSHIP ADVANTAGE ©

The White House

Washington

January 18, 1995

I am delighted to send greetings to all those celebrating National FFA Week, 1995, sponsored by the National FFA Organization.

Our nation's continued success requires us to empower each new generation of leaders with the expertise and understanding to meet the challenges ahead. Since 1928, the National FFA Organization has served to expose young men and women to the science, business and technology of agriculture, sparking ambitions and providing an invaluable "leadership advantage." The practical skills and insights your members gain open an exciting new world of possibility in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

I am pleased to commend the hard-working students, teachers, and community leaders of the National FFA for your continued commitment to high-quality agricultural education. Your efforts are helping to ensure a brighter tomorrow for all of our people.

Best wishes for a productive week and for every future success.

Bill Clinton

PALS Program Makes a Difference In South Carolina Schools

The arrival of the 1994 Fall Semester brought together several new pals from the local high school and elementary school in Manning, SC.

PALS or Partners in Active Learning Support, a mentoring program adopted by the Manning High School FFA chapter, matched high school students with elementary school students from various environments to provide educational guidance and stability to those with special needs.

An eager participant in a pilot program involving only 16 states, the Manning High FFA chapter immediately began scheduling activities and laying the groundwork for what has evolved into one of the most successful PALS programs in the Palmetto state. Manning Elementary School Principal Cynthia Boland and MES Counselor Myra Dyson worked closely with Manning High FFA Advisor and PALS Program Director Michael Haynes to identify students who could benefit from such a program, and each selected elementary students and high school agriculture students to be paired together as mentor and mentee for the school year. The mentors then began working to guide the elementary students through the year, increasing their chances for success in academics and life. In the process, the mentors also began to gain valuable leadership and interpersonal communications skills.

Begun in 1991 as a special project of the National FFA Organization, PALS was designed to help all those involved to build trust in others, develop positive self-esteem, and share interests and activities. Through the program, the students' natural interests in plants, animals and other aspects of the world around them serve as the vehicles through which the educational components of the program are delivered.

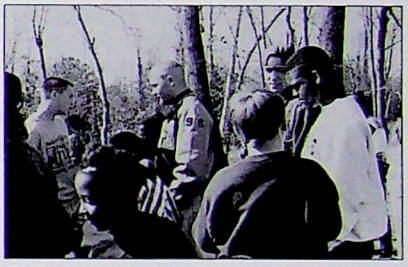
Enthused about the program, Dr. Larry Case, national FFA advisor, said, "The aim of the FFA is to develop young people through agricultural education. That goal is attained when FFA members accept the responsibility for helping to develop a child for the good of their individual communities and their society. The PALS experience builds maturity and self-worth in the older youth while providing an invaluable service to the younger child. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to implement a program that will make a positive difference in the lives of so many young people."

Keeping this goal in mind, the MHS FFA Chapter planned many activities for the 1994-1995 school year. They included an opening ice-breaker, weekly tutorial sessions, a drug-free rally, visits to the state fair and Riverbanks Zoo, a PALS Olympics, participation in a 5-day recreational camp at Cherry Grove Beach, planting an organic garden, construction of a gold-fish pond at MES, construction of birdhouses to be installed on campus at MES, a nature

(Continued on page 6)

(Back row, l-r) Matt Farfour and Wanda Winn of Aiken join Randy Freeman of Chesterfield for a group photo with their PALS at the conclusion of the national workshop in Kansas City, MO.

PALS take a break during the day long program of activities sponsored by the National FFA Organization.



PALS pair-up during the birdhouse installation at Manning Elementary School.

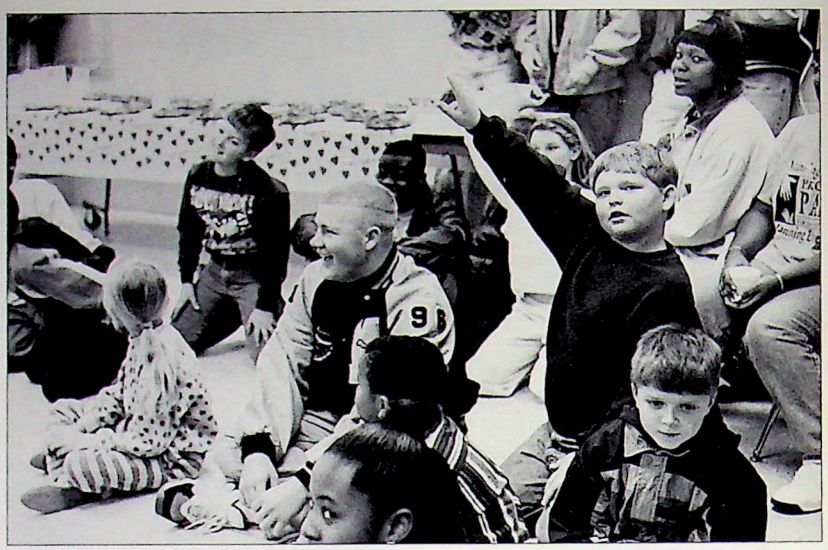
Carl Cutter (far right) of the Edisto Chapter works with a fellow FFA member and a PAL from the Kansas City area during a workshop at the national convention.

PALS (cont.)

walk and picnic, and activities and cookouts at MHS and the annual FFA banquet.

After participating in just a few events, the elementary school teachers already began to notice improvements in the children's schoolwork and in their levels of self-esteem. The mentees liked the help with schoolwork and the personal relationships they were building, and the mentors enjoyed the opportunity to be good role models.

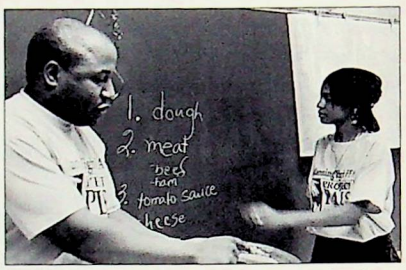
In discussing the success of their PALS program, Haynes gave much of the credit to his students for their dedication and maturity, and to the parents and the administrative staffs of both schools for their unfaltering support. In fact, in light of their accomplishments in Manning, MES Principal Cynthia Boland recently participated in a National PALS Conference at which only 14 administrators from around the country were invited. Held Feb. 2-5 in Arizona, the purpose of the conference was to evaluate the PALS program to identify and solve any problems. Said Boland, "We really haven't had any problems. The parents have been extremely supportive, and it certainly has helped improve self-esteem and interest in school. The activities are designed to make the connection to school and academics through science and math oriented learning applications."



Participating in the Ag Quiz was a sure ticket to getting one of the first pieces of hot, fresh pizza!

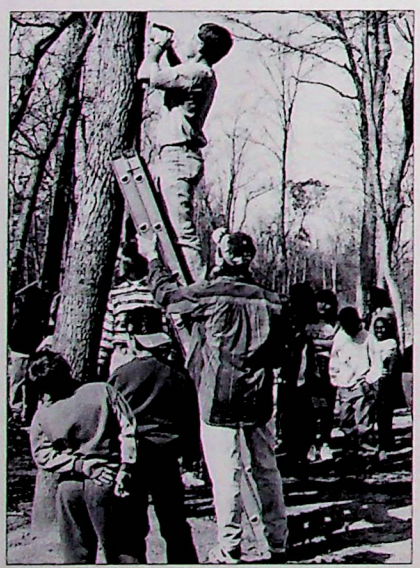
In addition to MHS, several other FFA chapters have also been hard at work building PALS programs in their own communities. Cleveland Jackson and his group from Union High School sponsored a week long trip to the FFA Camp at Cherry Grove last summer. And Advisor Joe Wilson of the Aiken FFA chapter drove students from Aiken, Edisto and Chesterfield to the 1994 National FFA Convention in order to arrive in time for the day long PALS workshop held at the beginning of the convention. His students participated in hands-on activities with youth from the Kansas City area, which were designed to teach them how to host activities back in their own communities.

Regardless of their size, these PALS programs are providing a positive outlook on education and life and offering an ideal opportunity to help young people become successful learners and resilient, productive citizens. For more information on incorporating PALS into your chapter or for assistance in building your program, contact the National FFA Organization, Teacher Services Team at (703) 360-3600.



Manning High FFA Advisor Michael Haynes and PALS Program Assistant Director Michelle Parker lead a learning activity at the PALS Pizza Party to reinforce agriculture's role in food preparation.

FFA member Falecia Snider presents a Valentine's Day gift to a PAL.



Kevin Roberson, a Project Pals mentors from Manning High School, installs a birdhouse that was built by the elementary students as a PALS activity.

Jennifer Ligon (right) and April (center), PALS mentor and mentee, enjoy their pizza lunch together along with other program members.

BRING *new energy* AND *excitement* TO YOUR CHAPTER

- TEACHERS REPORT IMPROVED SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND ATTENDANCE.
- STUDENT PARTICIPATION INCREASES DRAMATICALLY.
- ADMINISTRATORS OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.
- THIS PROGRAM RESULTS IN A MARKED INCREASE IN PARTICIPATION OF NON-TRADITIONAL FFA STUDENTS, INCLUDING CULTURALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE AND AT-RISK STUDENTS.

"It does take some time but you feel like the time that you put in is being paid back to you a hundred or a thousand fold."

—BRENDA EARLY, HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR

"The best crop we grow in our county is our kids. When they go through experiences like this, after they graduate they're going to be more productive citizens."

—CHARLES FRANKLIN, AGRICULTURE TEACHER

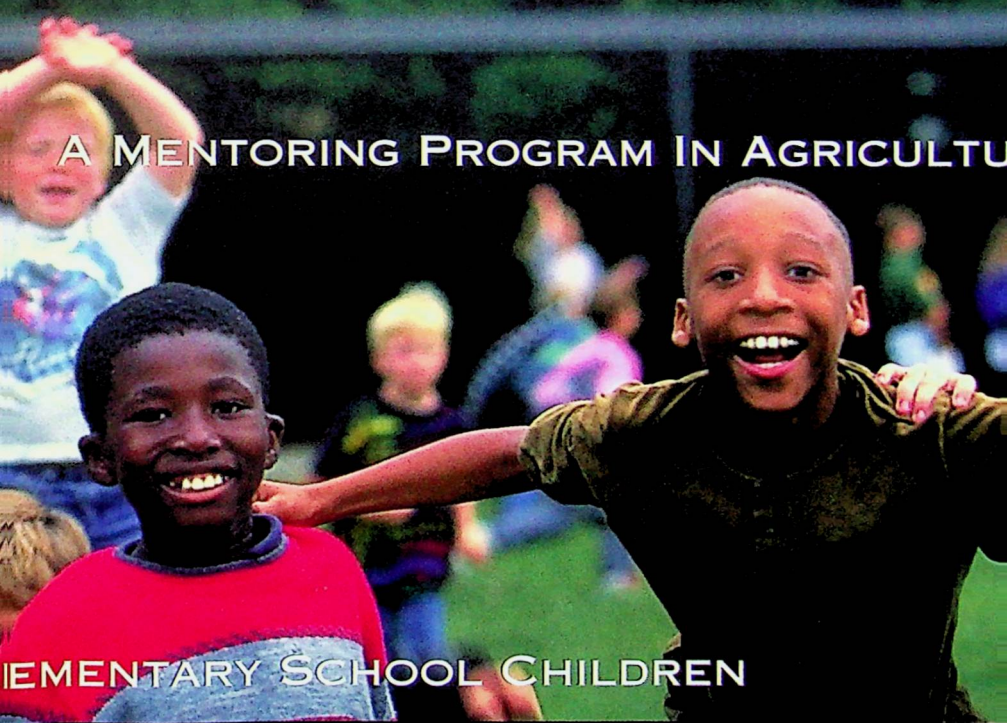
"I've taught 24 years and I was getting in a rut. Then this program came along. The kids got excited about it, membership is up, the community got excited about it...it revitalized our chapter."

—CURT DUVALL, AGRICULTURE TEACHER

WHAT PROGRAM *is responsible* FOR THIS?

P A

Tools to Get PALS Started



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L Your Chapter Call 1-800-PAL S-F

Charleston Host to 1995 Young Farmers State Convention

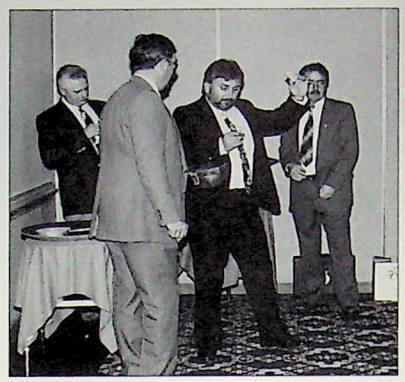
"Farming sure looks easy when your plow is a pencil and you're a thousand miles from a cornfield."
– Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1956

Although it has been nearly 40 years since Eisenhower made that statement, it still rings true today. Just ask any one of the South Carolina Young Farmers who arrived in North Charleston at the Marriott Hotel January 13-15 to celebrate the 1995 Young Farmer State Convention, and they'll probably agree.

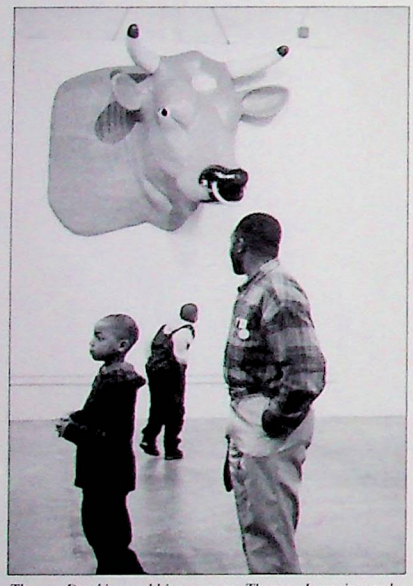
Despite the inclement weather often associated with their winter conventions, each year approximately 75-100 young farmers come together for a weekend of business, banquets, and tours designed to celebrate the accomplishments of young farmers and their chapters and focus on the diversity of agriculture in this state.

Highlights from this year's convention included the naming of Andrew Carter (Bamberg) as South Carolina Young Farmer of the Year, Steven McMillan (Colleton-Bamberg) as Chapter President of the Year, and Crescent as the Outstanding Chapter of the Year. In addition, awards were presented to top producers in the areas of corn, soybean, livestock, and dairy production as well.

Activities began Friday evening with a banquet honoring award recipients and visitors to the convention. State Commissioner of Agriculture Les Tindal and Dr. Anne Matthews and Dr. Dale A. Law of the State Department of Education were among some of the special guests invited to attend, as well as representatives Bob Rozor from DeKalb-Pfizer, David Duke from Mixon Seed Company, Bill Barrett from ConAgra, and Benny Hughes



1994 Young Farmer President Gene Forrest announces a winning number during the raffle hosted by the state officers.



Thomas Dawkins and his two sons, Thomas Jermaine and Jarell, check out the larger than life Coburg Dairy mascot during a tour of the facilities.

Young farmers attach their Coburg Dairy "Feel Good" pins before embarking on the guided tour of the plant.

Family Tradition Growing
Bamberg County Man is SC Young Farmer of the Year

Editor's Note: *The following article is being reprinted with the permission of* ***The State*** *Newspaper and Mr. Bill Hughes (Business Writer).*

Andrew Carter traces his farming roots back five generations and nothing would make him happier than for his children to carry on that tradition

For now, three-year-old Andy and 2-year-old Teresa are a little young to be making career decisions. But their father says he wants them to understand how much agriculture has meant to his family.

"I know farming's been good to me and since the first grade, I've never wanted to do anything else," said Carter, who has been farming full time since 1982.

It was that attitude, plus the success of his 1,320-acre farm, that led a panel to name Carter the 1994 South Carolina Young Farmer of the Year.

PROFILE

Judges in the annual competition, sponsored by the Future Farmers of America, were impressed with the diversity of Carter's operation, which includes cattle, hogs, timber and row crops.

"My Uncle Jay taught me early on that you need diversity in order to survive," said Carter, who credits his uncle and mentor, J.A. Hiers, with helping him start his farm and teaching him much of what he knows about agriculture.

Hiers, who bought his farm in 1943, has been an innovator in this part of the Lowcountry. He was among the first to plant coastal Bermuda grass for grazing and to build housing for his swine.

Hiers, 75, and his 33-year-old nephew have integrated row crop and livestock production into a smoothly functioning, almost self-sustaining system.

Corn, the main row crop, is grown to feed the cattle and hogs. Oats and rye are planted for winter grazing, and soybeans are swapped at the grain elevator for additional animal feed.

The livestock provides cash flow while the row crops are growing, and peanuts produce a slug of income in the fall.

Carter is so deeply involved in the farm and FFA activities that it almost comes as a surprise to learn that he's a coin and antique buff with an appreciation of agricultural heritage.

I think it would be great to have grown up on a farm years ago and be able to compare things then with the way they are now," he said.

Truth is, though, there probably would be no comparison. Production on South Carolina farms has increased dramatically thanks to mechanization, no-till cultivation and improved crop and livestock varieties.

At his farm, Carter's yields regularly top the Bamberg County average. They also the support the Carter and Hiers families and three full-time workers.

Carter also credits FFA involvement for a big part of his agricultural success. He joined the Colleton-Bamberg Young Farmer chapter in 1985, was a voting delegate to the National Convention in 1992-1993, and was president of the South Carolina State Chapter in 1993.

Carter says family life revolves in and around the farm and FFA activities. His wife, Lavet, is public health nurse at the Allendale County Health Department.

Ray Jameson (Edisto) was the state winner in the category of Non-Irrigated Soybean production.

from Pioneer. Praising the young farmers for their accomplishments, Tindal provided insight into the state's agricultural agenda for 1995 and concluded by saying that he looked forward to working closely with the young farmers in hosting the National Young Farmer Educational Institute in Charleston in December. Following the presentation of awards, Wayne Yates, a motivational speaker sponsored by Pioneer, recounted some humorous stories from his days growing up on a farm in Georgia, much to the complete amusement of the audience. The evening concluded with a raffle held by the 1994 young farmer officers in which the guests received a variety of prizes including hats, rain gauges, measuring tapes, work gloves, and more.

Early Saturday morning the group visited exhibits sponsored by each of the agricultural companies and spoke with their representatives about the latest advances in ag science and technology before departing for a tour of nearby Coburg Dairy. Despite the rainy weather, a large crowd assembled at the Coburg Dairy headquarters where they were shown an informative video relating the history of the company and were then guided through a tour of the production facilities. After the tour, the group then made their way back to the Marriott where they prepared for an entertaining afternoon at Charlestowne Landing.

Saturday's activities concluded with a banquet held that night in honor of the installation of President Ronald Myers and the new young farmer officers for 1995 and the retirement of Past President Gene Forrest and the 1994 young farmer officers. The 1995 Young Farmer Officers are as follows:

Ronald Myers, *President;*
Rex Bates, *President Elect;*
Rodge Estridge, *Dist. I Vice-President;*
Brian Beer, *Dist. II Vice-President;*
David DeWitt, *Dist. III Vice-President;*
Richard Rentz, *Dist. IV Vice-President;*
Gene Forrest, *Past President*
Stewart Glenn, *Executive Secretary.*

President Gene Forrest presents the Livestock Production Award to Rex Bates of the Hickory Tavern chapter.

State Commissioner of Agriculture Les Tindal and wife (seated to his left) were among the guest invited to speak at the convention.

Young farmers from every region of the state attended the awards banquet held Friday night.

For more information on the upcoming National Young Farmer Educational Institute, contact President Ronald Myers at Route 1, Box 1675, Bowman, SC 29018.

David Wilson of Chester receives the Energy Efficiency Award from Mr. Valdez of SCE&G.

Billy Keels accepts the second place award for 5-Acre Cotton production on behalf of William Gaines.

Young Farmer of the Year

Andrew Carter [Ehrhardt]

1995 State Officers:

President:	Ronald Meyers [Bowman]
President Elect:	Rex Bates [Hickory Tavern]
District I Vice President:	Rodge Estridge [Anderson]
District II Vice President:	Brian Beer [Richburg]
District III Vice President:	David DeWitt [Darlington]
District IV Vice President:	Richard Rentz [Branchville]
Past President:	Gene Forrest [Edgefield]
Executive Secretary:	Stewart Glenn [Hickory Tavern]
State Advisor:	Dr. Dale A. Law

State Chapter Contest Awards:

Dairy Production Award:	Billy Priester [Colleton-Bamberg]
Irrigated Corn Award:	Buddy Rivers [Hillcrest]
Non-Irrigated Corn Production:	William Jameson [Edisto]
Non-Irrigated Soybean Award:	Ray Jameson [Edisto]
Livestock Production Award:	Rex Bates [Hickory Tavern]
5-Acre Cotton Award:	Clark Stillinger [Edisto]
Swine Production Award:	Brian Clinkscales [ ]
Energy Efficiency Award:	David Wilson [Chester]
Chapter President Award:	Steven McMillan [Colleton-Bamberg]
Chapter Contest Award:	Crescent Chapter
Farm Service Center Award:	Billy McKee [Hickory Tavern]

Crescent Names 1994 Outstanding Young Farmer Chapter of the Year

James Copelan, agriculture teacher at Crescent High School in Iva, South Carolina, is very proud of the achievements of his Young Farmers of America chapter, and he has a right to be. The Crescent chapter recently received the "Outstanding Young Farmer Chapter of the Year Award" for 1994 at the State Young Farmers Convention in Charleston.

Attributing part of this recognition to the close relationship his chapter has with the local FFA chapter, Copelan said, "We try to work in conjunction with the Future Farmers of America with everything we do. We want to give our students every opportunity to work with the adults." For example, soon the Crescent Young Farmers chapter will be hosting their annual Easter Egg Hunt for the Handicapped with the Crescent High FFA chapter. The young farmers supply the eggs (they dyed eight dozen eggs and put prizes in eight dozen plastic eggs) and the FFA members hunt for them with the children. The Easter Egg Hunt was held last year and was a big success. Fifty disadvantaged children came to the school and immensely enjoyed the festivities.

Then, on April 29th, the young farmers will host an Antique Tractor Pull. Also held at the high school, they will build their own track and model tractors from the 1960s and beyond will be on display. All proceeds from the Pull will be used to benefit the high school. Said Copelan, "The Pull should benefit both the school and the community, so the first thing we will do with the proceeds is buy a billboard sign to put in front of the high school."

Helping the community is always uppermost in Copelan's mind when he sets up activities for his students. Three years ago, his chapter members set up a consignment auction where farmers would consign equipment that they wanted to sell. The auction really benefits the farmers in that it enables them to buy and sell locally. The young farmers send letters and furnish ads promoting the event throughout the state, and like all events hosted by the group, the auction is held at the high school. "Being that our school is located 11 miles from Anderson in between the two small towns of Starr and Iva, we want to do everything possible to highlight our school and community," stated Copelan.

Thanks in large part to his club's efforts, the auction has doubled in size since its beginning. The auction is now held every Spring (usually during the first week in April) and they are expecting a large turnout again this year.

National FFA Week is another particularly busy time for the young farmers as they host a tractor and truck display at which 6 tractor dealerships and 2 truck dealerships (Ford and Dodge) lend their vehicles to the students. Held February 18-25 at the high school, students had the opportunity to take a closer look at the vehicles and ask questions of the representatives on hand. On February 21st, the representatives give the keys to the students who are then allowed to drive the vehicles around the school. "This event is big for our students," noted Copelan. "Before we did this, farmers would have to go all over the country to buy their vehicles. Now the vehicles come to us and students can easily compare the products."

Asked if there was anything that made his chapter unique, Copelan replied that when students participate in either the consignment auction or the tractor pull, the young farmers sponsor those students' memberships dues upon joining the Young Farmer chapter. "We have really increased our membership by doing this," he said proudly. "We also spend most of our meetings focusing on what's really important to our community - animal husbandry. After all, Anderson County is the largest beef producing county in the state."

Interested in advertising in South Carolina's YF & FFA Magazine?

For more information on ad rates and availability, please contact Ed Crosby at (803) 781-5151.

Attention High School Seniors!

Each year the South Carolina Fertilizer and Agrichemicals Association makes available to the Agricultural Education Section of the State Department of Education a $ 500.00 scholarship for freshmen enrolling at Clemson University. Any high school senior who has been accepted for admission by Clemson or whose application is being considered for acceptance to pursue a course leading to a B.S. Degree in Agriculture is encouraged to submit an application. The scholarship recipient will be chosen by a special committee appointed by the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education and will be announced at the State FFA Convention in June. The award will be presented by a representative of the South Carolina Fertilizer and Agrichemicals Association.

Application forms can be obtained from your local agricultural education teacher, and must be completed and received in the office of the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education by April 1 in order to be eligible.

Mail To:
South Carolina Association of FFA
922 Rutledge Building
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

National Ag Day A Celebration of Nature and Environment

While each provides enough food for approximately 129 people, today's farmers and ranchers are also responsible for more forests and open land; cleaner water, soil and air; and more wildlife. Their contributions to preserve the environment will be celebrated during National Agriculture Week, March 19 through March 25, and National Ag Day, March 20, with the theme, **"Growing Better Every Day in Partnership With Nature."**

"Through this annual celebration of American agriculture, the industry has an opportunity to communicate about all that it's doing to protect the environment, while providing the best food and fiber possible. The ag industry is constantly striving to improve production methods that conserve natural resources, while ensuring the health and safety of future generations," said Elroy Webster, chairman of the Agriculture Council of America board of directors.

Through a joint partnership with the Center for Global Food Issues, the Ag Council will work to communicate these key messages to consumers. Dennis Avery, director for the Center, will release a book next month which discusses new technologies and their benefits to society and the environment. Mr. Avery brings established visibility and expertise to National Agriculture Day, while the Ag Council will aid Mr. Avery in positioning his messages with the American consumer.

Today, America's farmers and ranchers provide habitat for 75 percent of the nation's wildlife. Advancements in planting and harvest practices enable farmers to produce more food on fewer acres, leaving more land free for wildlife. In 12 years, the number of acres used for farming has decreased eight percent, but America's farmers are producing 14 percent more food and fiber from those acres. The trees that farmers and ranchers plant to protect their land provide food and shelter for birds, deer and other small animals, and the corn, wheat, and soybeans left on fields after harvest provide bountiful food for animals during the winter.

Minimum tillage, contour farming, strip cropping and other conservation practices have demonstrated equally impressive results in the area of soil erosion. In ten years, these farming practices have reduced soil erosion by 25 percent. Researchers are not only finding new ways to plant and harvest crops that benefit the environment; they are also finding a variety of new uses for agricultural products unrelated to food and clothing.

New technology is taking ag outputs and transforming them into replacements for products that are damaging to the environment. Corn starches are being used to create replacements for plastic, and print ink is being produced from soybeans. In just eight years, the number of newspapers using soy ink has increased from five to more than 3,000.

The Ag Council has developed planning kits for use by organizations and libraries across the country to communicate these important messages to the consumer. In addition to the planning kits, Agriculture Fact Cards, a National Ag Day Poster and media kits are available. To order Ag Day materials contact the Agriculture Council of America at 927 15th Street, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20005, or call Noah Wood at 1-800-AG-DAY (1-800-982-4329).

In Washington, the Ag Council will host a Congressional Agriculture Day reception on Thursday, March 16, 1995. This annual event brings members of Congress, producer and commodity groups, the media and industry representatives together to honor America's food and fiber producers. Events are also being planned by grassroots groups across the country, including urban and suburban communities. Each state department of agriculture will coordinate activities in their state capital, with each state commissioner presiding over them as the honorary chairperson.

The Agriculture Council of America is a not-for-profit organization with a broad based membership representing the entire agriculture industry. In addition to National Agriculture Day, the Ag Council coordinates FoodWatch, a nationwide food safety program. For more information please call 1-800-676-3608.

This information has been provided courtesy of Mark Bennett at the Ag Council of America. To order an Ag Day media kit, call Noah Wood at 1-800-98-AGDAY (982-4329).

The sensible idea behind planting windbreaks has really taken root.

And those roots are holding down American soil. American farmers have planted more than 170,000 miles of windbreaks to protect our precious land from the damaging effects of wind and water erosion. And each year, they add thousands of more miles of new trees and hedges to their land. American agriculture ... *Growing Better Every Day In Partnership With Nature.*

The Agriculture Council of America

Social graces aside, using the right fork is now environmentally correct.

Rest assured you're following the rules of etiquette. Disposable forks, knives, spoons, and other products are now being made from common starches. And since these starches are derived from crops, they are biodegradable and can be composted. Developments such as these are available to us courtesy of America's agriculture industry and the farmers and ranchers that are helping to keep our air, land and water clean. American agriculture ... *Growing Better Every Day In Partnership With Nature.*

The Agriculture Council of America

The Next Step.... An FFA International Experience

In keeping with the diversity of the national FFA membership, your National FFA Organization has partnered with other leading providers of international programs to expose FFA members a wide variety of experiences and opportunities. Consider these possibilities!

A WIDE RANGE OF CHOICES

Travel Seminars
Length: 10-14 Days

Want to see a lot in a short time? Focus on a specific agricultural area? Then a Travel Seminar may be the right experience for you. Choose from the following:

- European Livestock
- Horticulture in Holland and Belgium
- Agricultural Marketing in Japan
- Australian Sheep and Cattle Ranches
- State Officer Greenweek Leadership Seminar

(World Agriculture Leadership Summit in Germany)All seminars have an adult leader and include international air travel, in-country travel, hotels, most meals and a stay with a host family. Travel Seminars require a minimum number of participants.

Agriscience/Natural Resources Research
Length: About 2 weeks

Work with scientists in the field gathering data for actual research projects! Study the effects of farming practices on the Yangtze River in China or the way farmers adapt to the increased food demand in India.

Choose from a wide variety of agricultural and natural resource research projects offered by Earthwatch, a non-profit working coalition of citizens and scientists founded in 1972 through the Smithsonian Institution.

England or Australia Homestays
Length: 3 weeks

Start exchanging ideas as soon as you step off the plane. Everybody speaks English so there's great communication! Experience life on a sheep ranch down under or on a dairy farm in the United Kingdom.

Your host family will introduce you to the thrilling world of agriculture in another land.

Special Grant Exchanges
Length: 4 weeks

Each year, FFA applies for special government grants that allow members to travel abroad at a reduced cost. Focus on helping youth from developing countries learn about community involvement, leadership and agriculture. New grants are announced frequently.

International Explorers
Length: 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months

For those who have a strong interest in the culture and agriculture of a specific country, the Explorer program gives you the option to visit different regions of a country while staying with host families. Live with a rural host family in the country of your choice for the next three weeks, then travel to another family for the next three weeks. Choose from locations around the world!

World Experience in Agriculture (WEA)
Length: 3, 6, or 12 months

FFA's long established program offers members hands-on experience working in agriculture while living in another country. Learn the practices and technology of family farming in Europe, Australia or Japan.

Agribusiness Internships
Length: 6 or 12 months

Designed for college-aged students who want international agricultural business training on their resume, these internships, offered through the American Institute for Practical Training, place you in the corporate world of international agribusiness.

And Now The Details...
Scholarships, Fundraising

The cost of your international experience will depend on which program you choose. Limited scholarships are available from the National FFA Organization.

You might also find sponsors in your state or community. You will be surprised at how your community will support your idea to travel abroad.

You Don't Speak the language?

No problem. English is widely spoken around the world. Seminar leaders will help you communicate and it's likely that one member of your host family will speak some English. Still, an understanding of the native tongue will enhance your experience. Put your skills to use from language class.

What about safety?

Each of the Travel Seminars has an experienced leader who will guide your group throughout their travels. There will often be local FFA advisors on the short programs including Travel Seminars, Agriscience/Natural Resources Research and the Grant Exchanges.

For the longer exchanges, the FFA works with well-established partnership organizations both here and abroad. Participants also receive extensive training on international travel during their orientation session.

Age

Anyone 15 to 24 years old is eligible.

University credits

Many universities offer credit in foreign language, humanities and agricultural studies for an FFA exchange program.

Also....Consider Hosting An International Student

Why not bring the world to your front door? Each year the FFA brings hundreds of young agriculturists to the United States. Here is a chance for you and your family to experience international agriculture without leaving home.

For More Information, contact:
Student Services Specialist
The National FFA Organization
5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Hwy.
Alexandria, VA 22309-0160
(703) 360-3600, Ext. 238

Alumni Raffle Planned For FFA Convention

A statewide raffle is being planned for the FFA Convention to be held at Clemson in June. We hope everyone of you will help us out with this. Our plans are as follows.

So far two handmade quilts have been donated to us. Your council members are also soliciting prizes from various sources in their areas. We are asking other FFA Alumni members to assist us also. We hope to have a good number of very fine items to be raffled off.

Around the end of January or early February, tickets for the raffle will be distributed. The agricultural teachers have approved a plan for us to send a number of tickets to each one of the agricultural departments for FFA students to sell. We will also send some ticket to each of our members to sell. All tickets will sell for $1. The tickets will have a stub that has the name and address of the purchaser recorded on it. These stubs are to be returned to us along with the purchase price. Winning tickets will be drawn during the FFA Convention by selected FFA members and prizes awarded at that time. Winners will not have to be present. Prizes will be delivered to them.

Funds from this raffle will be used to help us start an in-service program for first and, if possible, second year teachers. This program was approved by the membership at our annual meeting in June. It will cost several thousand dollars to operate properly. Its purpose is to:

a. Encourage the first year teacher and spouse through their early years of teaching.
b. Provide seasoned advice on how to handle the multitude of new experiences the first year teacher is facing.
c. Continually assist the first year teacher to see what an ideal program of agriculture is.
d. Encourage regional and state participation in agricultural and FFA promotions and activities.
e. Assist the first year teacher in maintaining or organizing a strong FFA Alumni affiliate.

If sufficient funds are raised through this effort, other activities to help promote the FFA and agricultural education will be started. It's a beginning. We hope it will result in much greater things in the future.

We hope each and every FFA student will help to make this activity a success.

FFA Alumni Membership Campaign Starts

Though the membership books have been closed for 1995, enrollment of new members is open the entire year. Anyone joining now becomes a 1996 member with privileges through the rest of '95 also. They would receive the SC FFA Alumni Newsletter for the remainder of the year, though they would not receive the national newsletter until 1996. That is a good reason to use this time to encourage former FFA students and anyone interested in the promotion of agricultural education to join right now.

It is also a good time to think of getting a local affiliate going if you do not currently have one. If one has started in your area this past year and you have not yet become affiliated, take the steps to do so.

In order to encourage the membership, the Alumni Council at its September meeting voted to ask the SCVATA Executive Committee to approve the following plan. The SCVATA Executive Committee did approve it at their meeting Sept. 12 and the plan was presented to teachers at their fall district conferences. The plan is as follows: Currently enrolled FFA students will be asked in the next few weeks to enlist individuals in their local areas to join the FFA Alumni. If an individual FFA member enlists 15 members or more, they can keep $1 for each membership obtained from the $11 state and national dues they have collected. They will fill in the information needed for membership on the enclosed Legion of Merit Citation sheet, along with the remainder of the fees collected, to the SC FFA Alumni Exec. Sec/Treas. This would also entitle the individual to receive the Legion of Merit Citation awarded at Kansas City each year, and would enable that chapter to have the membership base for starting an FFA Alumni affiliate.

In order to facilitate this within the state for the 1996 membership year, the SC FFA Alumni Exec. Sec/Treas, 102 Daleview Circle, Clemson, SC 29631 must receive it before Sept. 15, 1995. He would be very happy to receive them at any time before that date, even in the next few weeks. This would be a great encouragement for the SC FFA Alumni and would also give those who had joined membership for the rest of 1995.

Teachers will receive more details on this around the end of January or the first part of February.

Farmers are stripping, but it's not burlesque.

To be precise, farmers across the nation are saving the soil by stripcropping–planting strips of grass between row crops. And as a result, they're protecting our precious land from water and wind erosion. It's a performance definitely worth applauding. American agriculture ... *Growing Better Every Day In Partnership With Nature.*

The Agriculture Council of America

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